

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above identified patent application are requested. Claims 10-18 are now in the application with claim 10 being independent. Claims 10,12, 17, and 18 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 10-14 and 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,560,281 to Nelson. These contentions are respectfully traversed.

Claim 10:

Amended claim 10 recites (underlining added for emphasis) "...wherein during and/or after a polishing operation, potassium fluoride, potassium sulfate, sodium fluoride, sodium sulfate and/or aluminium sulfate is added to the polishing bath and/or a sulfuric acid washing bath in quantities of 2 - 10 g of metal fluoride per liter or 3 - 15 g of metal sulfate per liter of polishing bath or sulfuric acid washing bath...."

The Office Action of July 24, 2006 at 2 asserts that (underlining added for emphasis) "Nelson also discloses that inorganic sulphate salt such as aluminum sulphate is added into the etching bath in order to precipitate hexafluorosilicate for reduction of the concentration of hexafluorosilicate, wherein the added aluminum sulfate concentration falls within the claimed range (col. 2, lines 50-68)." The Applicants disagree.

Nelson (Col. 2, lines 63-68) discloses (underlining added for emphasis) "..., the sulfates are added to the acid bath in an amount of about 0.75 to 2.5 pounds per gallon of acid bath. The presently preferred range is about 1 to 1.5 pounds per gallon of

acid bath, with the presently operative amount of about 1 pound per gallon of acid bath." Thus, Nelson does not disclose a concentration of less than 0.75 pounds per gallon of acid bath and further teaches that about 1 pound per gallon is the operative amount.

Conversely, claim 10 is directed to a concentration of 3 - 15 g of metal sulfate per liter. When converted to metric values, it can be seen that the minimum concentration disclosed by Nelson (0.75 pounds per gallon) is approximately 90 g of aluminum sulfate per liter. Thus, Nelson teaches using at least six times the claimed concentration of metal sulfate. Therefore, the aluminum sulfate concentration disclosed by Nelson does not fall within the claimed range. Moreover, Nelson indicates that 0.75 pounds per gallon does not constitute an operative amount and that an even higher concentration should be used.

For at least this reason, claim 10 is allowable over Nelson. Claims 11-18 depend from claim 10. Therefore, dependent claims 11-18 are allowable for at least the reason discussed with respect to claim 10.

Claim 12:

Amended claim 12 recites (underlining added for emphasis) "...wherein two or more of the group comprising: potassium fluoride, K_2SO_4 , Na_2SO_4 , and NaF, are added to the polishing bath." Nelson fails to disclose using such a combination.

Nelson (Col. 2, lines 50-59) discloses adding a single sulfate salt - namely aluminum sulfate - to a mixed acid bath. Additionally, Nelson (Col. 3, lines 1-41) presents three examples describing the addition of a single sulfate salt to an acid bath. Nelson does not disclose using a combination comprising metal fluorides, metal sulfates, or one or more metal

fluorides and one or more metal sulfates. Therefore, Nelson does not disclose, teach, or suggest adding two or more compounds of the group comprising potassium fluoride, K_2SO_4 , Na_2SO_4 , and NaF to a polishing bath.

For at least this reason, dependent claim 12 is allowable over Nelson based on its own merits.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nelson in view of JP 2000-147474 A. Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nelson in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,555,304 to Sälzle. Claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 10 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons discussed with respect to claim 10.

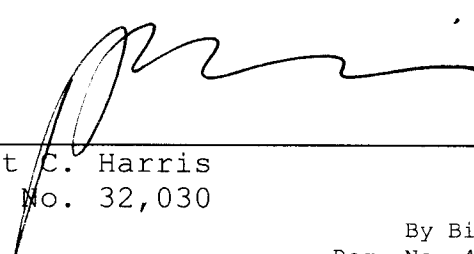
Concluding Comments

By responding in the foregoing remarks only to particular positions taken by the Office, the Applicants do not acquiesce to other positions taken by the Office that have not been explicitly traversed. Additionally, the Applicants' arguments for the patentability of a claim presented in this response should not be understood to indicate that no further reasons for the patentability of that claim exist.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account
number 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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